The Long Island FISHERMAN

50¢

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DECEMBER 14th, 1978 ★ Volume 13, Number 50 ★ *13th Year of Publishing* ★ FIFTY-CENTS

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The Long Island FISHERMAN

The Difference Between Just Fishing and Catching Fish!

VOL. 13, NO. 50 DECEMBER 14, 1978

Features:

Fish Talk:
FROM THE MAILBOX ..... Dr. W. A. Muller ... 6
NATIONAL SCENE ..... Al Ristori 7
Captain's Table:
LOBSTER DELICIOSO ..... Andy Regina 8
Sinker Bouncing:
WEATHER AND THE FISHERMAN ..... Matt Ahern 10
UNUSUAL CATCHES OF '78 ..... Fred Guardineer 11
Surf Side:
A CHRISTMAS CAROL ..... Doc Muller 12
HOOKING AND PLAYING FISH ..... Gerald Hahn 14
REFLECTIONS ..... Fred Golofaro 16

Departments:

Pass It On 4
Contests & Tourneys 5
Fishing Reports 18
Classified Ads 26
Tide Tables 27
Solunar Tables 27

COMING NEXT WEEK:
VACATION TIME

About the Cover —

The staff at The Fisherman would like to wish all of our readers a very happy and peaceful holiday season. We will resume publishing with our January 4 issue.

Richard Reina — PUBLISHER
Scott Simons — MANAGING EDITOR
Dr. Wm. A. Muller — EDITOR
Al Ristori — CONSERVATION EDITOR
Stu Miller — ADVERTISING MANAGER
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Pass It On...

LOBSTER MANAGEMENT PLAN PREPARED

The Northeast Marine Fisheries Board announced recently it has adopted a comprehensive plan for management of the fisheries for American or northern lobsters along the Atlantic seaboard.

As adopted by the Board, the lobster management plan incorporates the views and concerns of lobster fishermen and dealers expressed at more than twenty informal public meetings held recently in the lobster-producing states to discuss proposed lobster management measures. The plan calls for an increase in the legal minimum size of lobster that may be taken by the fishermen and the development of long-range programs designed to reduce current high levels of lobster fishing effort and excessive rates of exploitation of the resource. In addition, the plan calls for the incorporation of openings in the construction of lobster traps to allow small lobsters to escape and the prohibition of the landing of lobster parts and meat, a practice which unnecessarily reduces the value of the landed product.

Under the plan, the minimum legal size limit for lobster would be increased to 3-3/16" carapace length (about one pound) in all areas by 1981, and eventually to 3-1/2" (about 1.25 pounds), which the Board determined is the optimum minimum size for all areas based on presently available information. The plan calls for a series of 1/16" annual increases in the size limit toward the optimum minimum size. However, due to uncertainties regarding the precise affects a 3-1/2" size limit may have on the fishery and the market, the plan calls for additional studies before the size limit is increased to greater than 3-3/16" and evaluation of each incremental increase in the minimum size.

The Northeast Marine Fisheries Board is comprised of fishery administrators from each of the ten coastal states and the National Marine Fisheries Service. The Board was formed in 1972 under auspices of the National Marine Fisheries Service's State/Federal Fisheries Management Program to provide a unified approach to management of fishery resources that cross jurisdictional boundaries between the states and between the states and the Federal Government. Under the Program, funding is provided for the conduct of special management oriented research projects, in addition to expenses for meetings of scientists and fishery administrators to review and analyze the results of research and to evaluate strategies for management of the resource.

The plan will be presented to the ten coastal States of Maine through Virginia and to the New England and Mid-Atlantic Regional Fishery Management Councils for their endorsement. Upon endorsement by each of the parties, the plan will provide the basis for coordinated management of the inshore fisheries, which are under the jurisdiction of the states, and the offshore fisheries, which are under Federal jurisdiction.

THE N.Y. SPORTFISHING COUNCIL NEW OFFICERS

The Council, at its Annual Meeting, elected the following individuals to its Slate of Officers for the coming season:

President: George Gerhold; **Vice Pres.:** Fred Hodgson; **Treas:** Ed Sweeney; **Recording Sec'y:** Patricia Kuhnle.

Board of Directors: Charter/Open Boats—Dave Greene; Bait & Tackle Shops—George Valentine; Marinas/Boat Liveries—Alan DeNicola; Manufacturers—Dick Mermon; Boat Fishing Clubs: (under 31')—Ed Sweeney; (over 31')—Bob Hunt; Surf Fishing Clubs—George Hulse; At-Large—Fred Hodgson; Individuals:A—Joe Kayal, and B—George Gerhold.

From the members present at this meeting it was unanimously decided that the fishing fraternity represented by the Council is still against saltwater licensing. Rumors have persisted that licensing was inevitable; nonetheless, the membership has turned down any such speculation. Consequently, our Watch Dog Committee will be formed to investigate and research for any political maneuvers regarding saltwater licensing.

The second important item that was discussed and resolved is that the Council will pursue its efforts for the banning of gillnetting in the Great South Bay. At the meeting of the Officers and Directors on December 13, the program and proposed legislation which was instituted last year will be reinstated and political backing immediately secured, with the intent to have such legislation in effect in time for the spring spawning of the weakfish in the Great South Bay.

For any further information on these issues or others that the Council will be involved in, please phone George Gerhold at (516) 431-9167, after 6PM.

FREE 4 W/DRIVE LECTURES

George at **Van's 4x4 Conversions of L.I.** has asked us to announce that he is accepting invitations from fishing clubs and/or groups for lectures, plus films and visuals on beach buggies, 4 w/d maintenance, front end maintenance, etc.

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SPIN FISHING RECORDS

During the month of June, 1978, representatives of the International Spin Fishing Association, Gene Aylesworth, Neil Haeger and Dick Ream, met with IGFA Trustees Arthur Hall and Horace Witherspoon to lay the groundwork for the transfer of the ISFA record-keeping system to IGFA. At that time, it was decided that ISFA would complete their awards year and plan for the actual transfer shortly thereafter.

In a recent issue of the ISFA newsletter "Tote Sheet," Dick Ream announced that their current procedures and trophy program will continue through October 31, 1978, and that the actual cessation of ISFA as an entity will take place December 1, 1978. Mr. Ream stated: 'IGFA's established and expanding worldwide contacts in compiling and maintaining saltwater records and their recent move to freshwater areas makes them the logical recipient of the ISFA fresh and saltwater files."

In planning for this transfer, E. K. Harry, President of IGFA, stated: "We in IGFA feel that the officials of ISFA have made a wise decision, and IGFA looks forward to including these twenty-five years of record-keeping data with our own extensive files as well as those recently acquired from **Field & Stream** and the Saltwater Fly Rodders of America, International. The die is now cast for IGFA to develop into the the worldwide authority for game fish records."

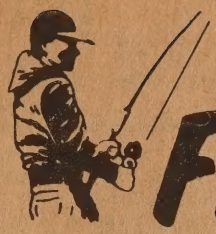
Contests & Tournaments

27th ANNUAL MONTAUK TOURNEY

The Sound Surf Fishing Club, Northport, held its 27th Annual Montauk Surf Fishing Tournament and came off the beach winners with eighteen fish on the weekend of October 20-21-22 as follows:

John Kranenberg—Bass, 23 lbs. 3 oz; Artie Sprague—Bass, 22 and 18½ lbs.; Dick Kranenberg—Bass, 21 lbs. 9 oz. and blues of 8¾ and 7½ lbs.; Butch Sprague—Bass, 21 lbs. 2 oz. and weakfish, 6 lbs.; Tom Furey—bass, 15 lbs. and blue, 9 lbs.; Joe Russo—bass, 6 lbs. and six blues, 4-6 lb. range, and Howie Klerk—weakfish, 8½ lbs.

The Sound Surf Fishing Club meets every fourth Monday, 8:30 p.m., at the VFW Hall on Warner Road, Elwood, L.I. Both surf and boat fishermen who are seeking an active club are cordially invited to attend. For additional information call, Bob Holm 516-261-5166.



The Long Island FISHERMAN

SLIDE & FILM SHOW SERIES FOR WINTER OF 1978-79

These shows are available to sportfishing clubs and environmental organizations in the New York Marine District in a first come, first served basis pending the availability of the show producers. If you would like to be considered for a show between December 1, 1978 and March 30, 1979, just fill out the form below and mail it to:

The Long Island Fisherman
Dr. W.A. Muller, *Editor*
P.O. Box 1994
Sag Harbor, N.Y. 11963

The three shows available are:

MONTAUK FISHING—*by Scott J. Simons*

This slide show and talk will discuss the how, where and why of Montauk boat fishing for fluke, bluefish, striped bass, cod and pollack. Diamond jigging techniques will be emphasized.

WEAKFISHING—*by Dr. William A. Muller*

This slide show and talk is again being offered by popular demand. Topics include the ecology and life cycle of the weakfish. There are also discussions of seasonal locations and angling techniques.

SALT MARSHES & SPORTFISHING—*by Dr. W.A. Muller*

A twenty minute 16mm color sound film on salt marshes and how they are responsible for a viable coastal fishery. The film is followed by a question and answer period.

STRIPED BASS—*by Dr. William A. Muller*

Slide show and talk about how and where to catch striped bass. Other topics include the fish cycle and ecology of the species.

★ ★

Club Name or Organization_____

Name of Representative . . . . . .

Name of 1st show choice: . . . . . .

Alternative 2nd show choice: . . . . . .

First date requested: . . . . . .

Alternative date: . . . . . .

Home telephone number: . . . . . .

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Home address: . . . . . .

Size of membership of club: . . . . . .

Where does club meet? . . . . . .

FISH TALK
with Dr. William A. Muller

FROM THE MAILBOX

DID YOU SEE?? Peter Vaughn of Southold was kind enough to send a recent clipping from Newsday's Long Island Magazine. "I was wondering if you have seen this article that reviews people's attitudes towards hunting and fishing. In the light of a recent stand taken by The Cousteau Society against sport fishing, I thought it might be worth discussing." You're right, Pete! It is not only worth discussing, but also worth repeating. Newsday summarized a survey. In that survey they asked the question: "Is it wrong for people to hunt animals such as deer and birds for sport?" The results were that sixty-six percent of those surveyed said yes, while thirty-four percent said no! Then they asked: "Is it wrong to fish as a sport?" The results were that eighteen percent of those asked said yes, while a gratifying eighty-two percent said that fishing for sport is fine! These results, we think, are indicative of several currently held beliefs. First, that fish are lowly creatures and, therefore, somehow it doesn't matter whether they are taken by hook and line, mangled in a net, crushed by a haul seine, or harpooned. Many mothers would burst into tears if they stood and watched a deer go down in the forest, but say nothing to their five-year-old when he or she nets a few spearing and leaves them to dry out and die on the sand! This is not a commentary—it is a simple re-telling of the way things are. However, the sport fisherman who has watched a smart old cow bass feed in the shadow line of a bridge or cooperatively herd a school of bunker into mayhem knows that fish are not lowly creatures. Modern bony fishes, in fact, rule the seas. They dominate the oceans in terms of numbers and diversity. Sharks and whales may get all of the headlines, but fish are where it's at. The second tempo of the times is conservative liberalism. Now that may sound stupid and perhaps it is, but here goes. In my invention, a conservative liberal is one who is so narrow minded in his or her liberal beliefs that concepts such as scope, degree, moderation, and reasonableness are forgotten. That is what Cousteau and the Society have been guilty of. They have become so zealous in guarding and protecting the oceans for future generations that they have forgotten that the present generation has rights too, and we should have the opportunity to enjoy the recreational benefits that the sea can offer. Thus, it should come as no suprise when reading the results of the Newsday survey to find out that seventy-eight percent of the liberals support a no hunting position.

BLACKFISH FEEDING. Sara Grimm of The Bronx recently wrote and wanted to know more about blackfish. "I have only been fishing for about two years, but I have become a very enthusiastic angler. On my second expedition my husband took me blackfishing. Well, I'll tell you, it was an instant love affair. My question is this: my husband frequently goes out at night to fish for stripers and blues, yet he never goes for blacks at night. When I asked him about it, he said he never thought about it. How about it—do they feed at night?" Almost any fish will feed at night, given the right set of circumstances, but there are some fish which are considered to be true night hunters and others that feed primarily by day. Bass, blues, and weaks are generally the three species that come to mind when one thinks about night feeding predators. We used to think that fish like flounders, fluke, and blackfish were day feeders; however, most of that opinion was based upon lack of fishing effort and not real study. I have caught any number of fluke at night and a recent report suggested that at least a few readers found the flounders ready and willing nighttime feeders. My surf fishing partner has taken a few blackfish on artificials in the waning moments of dusk when there wasn't enough light to qualify as daytime. Most blackfish, especially around reefs and rock piles will become quiet at night simply because most of the bait they seek will become quiet and also because they are more vulnerable to predation at night. Small blackfish are easy prey for night feeding bass and blues who often find the wrecks and reefs to be ideal hunting grounds in the dark. Probably, some day, somebody will take a few dozen green crabs and head out to fish some shoal under good weather conditions at the right time of the year and prove that big blackfish are the rewards.

FISH DIGESTION. Mike Lund of Glen Cove recently sent a letter inquiring about how fish digest what they eat. "The other day, my friend caught a bass of about five pounds. When we cleaned it there was a fish inside. The fish was badly decomposed, but appeared to be either a bergal or a blackfish of maybe seven or eight inches. My friend, Larry, said casually that the bait was probably eaten early that morning—maybe twelve hours before we cleaned it, and I thought that the time between eating and digesting was much less. Can you help us in this argument? P.S.—If I win the argument, I win five bucks!" Maybe before I answer the question in my usual wishy-washy manner, I should find out which of you is willing to split the money before I pick a side? Seriously, the discussion that took place between you and your friend is a very common one and a great deal of confusion shrouds our understanding of fish digestion. The stomach acids of many fish are very powerful and this is especially true of predators. Why? Look at what predators have to eat—bones, scales, and at times, shells. Now, it isn't likely that nature would adapt a fish to surviving in a certain niche only to waste precious energy by not digesting the entire prey. As it is, the energy loss (i.e., not directly converted from flesh to flesh) from one food level to the next can be as high as sixty-six percent! Bones are fairly easy to digest since they are mostly calcium phosphate and readily digested by acid; but scales are non-living protein like your fingernails and are hard to digest. Have you ever noticed how scales will remain for weeks after a fish has been cleaned? The skin and bones will go, but the scales will linger on. Thus, predators will digest a meal very quickly. It wouldn't be unusual for an entire whole fish to be turned to mush in less than a few hours depending on the size of the prey, the size of the predators, and the species of predator. Smaller and softer baits such as sand eels, will go even more quickly. Blackfish have a nice digestive tract and they can easily handle all kinds of tough hard foods such as shells and leathery protein materials. Perhaps one of the most powerful digestive tracts belongs to some of the sharks. All kinds of garbage has been found in the stomachs of sharks and most are in one degree or another of decay; even hooks will dissolve and corrode away quickly.

DO FISH HURT? A ten-year-old reader from Elmhurst, Queens, John Palladino, recently wrote asking if a fish feels pain when it is hooked. "I have been fishing for a few years and the other day when I caught a flounder I thought about how it must hurt the fish. I once got a hook in my finger and it hurt bad. I asked my Dad about it and he said that fish are coldblooded and they don't feel anything. Is that true?" Well, John, you are correct—being hooked does hurt the fish. The fact that they are coldblooded means only that the body temperature of a fish roughly corresponds to the temperature of the water that it swims in, but does not mean that the fish cannot feel pain. The nervous system of a fish is very well developed and they possess a few special characteristics that even man hasn't evolved. The lateral line system along the side of the body, for instance, picks up signals about both

(Continued on page 23.)

NATIONAL SCENE

NEWS & NOTES ON THE WORLD OF FISHING
with Al Ristori

NRA Claims Gains in Elections

The National Rifle Association (NRA) is claiming significant success in the recent elections, into which the NRA Political Victory Fund invested some $600,000. That may sound like a lot, but is actually small potatoes compared to the millions in contributions from unions and political action funds representing most special interest groups—such as doctors, teachers, various industries, etc.

In the past, NRA has played a part in the defeats of Senators Joe Clark in Pennsylvania and Joe Tydings in Maryland. They actually hit their high point this year when Representative Don Fraser was defeated in the Minnesota Senatorial Primary. The general election defeats in Minnesota of Senator Wendell Anderson and Governor Rudy Perpich (both judged anti-gun) were also considered signs of success. Other particulrly favorable results to the NRA were the victories of Roger Jepsen over Senator Dick Clark (also an opponent of the 200-Mile Limit) in Iowa; Congressman Bill Cohen over Senator Hathaway in Maine, and of Gordon Humphrey over Senator Tom McIntyre in New Hampshire. The only setback in the Senate was Senator Bob Griffin's loss to Carl Levin in Michigan.

Altogether NRA figures that of the ninety new members of Congress, sixty-six have "A" ratings from the organization. Most importantly, eight of the thirteen new Senators are figured to be more "pro-gun" than their predecessors, and only one less favorably disposed. The Political Victory Fund contributed to 167 incumbent Senators and Representatives, plus 91 non-incumbents—a total of 258 Federal races. The PVF funded candidate won in 213 contests—a very good success ratio of eighty-three percent.

All the foregoing isn't intended strictly for the benefit of the hunters who read this column. Hopefully it will also awaken fishermen to the fact that without an adequate political arm their priorities will usually take a back seat to those of interests that put their dollars on the line. Perhaps this isn't the way we'd like to see things done in this country, but the facts of the situation are clear. Unless fishermen are willing to support candidates favorable to their interests, both financially and with their votes, it's going to be difficult to make much progress in this area.

Of course, it's true that the 200-Mile Limit was achieved by an almost unprecedented "citizens' campaign." The Emergency Committee to Save America's Marine Resources was practically operated out of my back pocket for the more than four years it took to get the law passed. We never had much cash on hand and most of that came from $5 and $10 membership contributions. We did get a minimum amount of help from the tackle industry (Penn and Shakespeare paid for the printing of some of the posters we distributed throughout the country—and Garcia provided our office space); but the massive effort involved in getting thousands of letters written to Congress was basically undertaken with meager funding and one hundred percent volunteer help.

Unfortunately, not many fishery issues arouse the almost universal interest sparked by that battle. The flood of letters then overwhelmed the powerful opposition of the West Coast tuna interests, plus the State and Defense Departments. When you come to an issue such as including tuna in the law, there just aren't enough concerned fishermen to defeat the special interests—that's why we desperately need well organized and financed national and local organizations to carry the ball for all sport fishermen. The American League of Anglers (ALA) and National Coalition for Marine Conservation (NCMC) are attempting to perform this function on the national level. However, both have been beset with financial problems which has reduced their potential effectiveness; nevertheless, they represent our best hope at the present time and deserve your support. For more information contact ALA at 810 18th Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 2006. Address for the National Coalition is Box 23298, Savannah, Georgia 31403.

In many fields the industry is large and powerful, putting it in a position to effectively deal with legislation. That's not the case with our sport. The fishing tackle industry is relatively small, and most of its companies are small business operations. Until recently, there was no legislative activity at all by the trade organization. When I was in the tackle business, I got involved in the American Fishing Tackle Manufacturers' Association during my quest for help in the 200-Mile Limit fight. I subsequently served as Chairman of the Legislative Committee for four years, during which time we got a budget for the first time; fought a successful battle against a ban on graph recorders in Minnesota that was almost passed; and hired a staff assistant with lobbying experience. The tackle industry is finally making its voice heard in Washington, but still has a long way to go before it can really be a force.

The bottom line is that you and I must get involved if we want to pass on to our children fisheries as productive as we've known. Join organizations that are working toward these objectives, and try to get your local club interested in conservation issues. Most importantly, drop a line to your State and Federal Legislators, telling them how you feel about these issues. Even money isn't as effective as the collective force of such letters!

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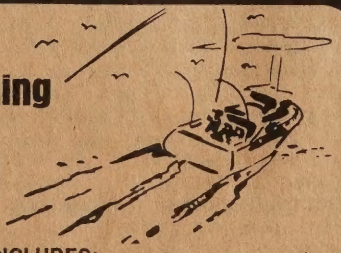

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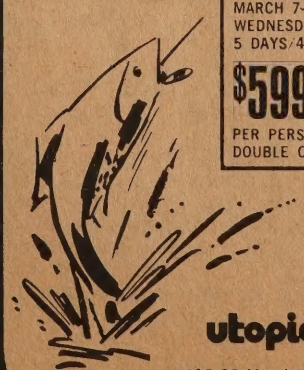

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THE CAPTAIN'S TABLE ...From the Godfather's Cookbook

by Andy Regina

LOBSTER DELICIOSO

The single flight of stairs looked like Mt. Everest as I contemplated the ascent, muddled by too much twelve-year-old Scotch, and bogged down from over-eating to excess again. My wife took particular delight in mentioning my over-indulgences as I struggled to the summit and then fumbled with the house keys, trying to select the proper key for each of the three locks that had become mandatory to security in these crime-ridden times. The nagging didn't bother me as much as my shoes did; those new patent leather monsters that fit so beautifully in the store seemed to have shrunk two sizes from all the dancing we had done, and I was dying to slip out of 'em and give my feet a break.

Once inside—and those stupid dancing slippers were kicked off—I relaxed in my favorite chair as I awaited the black coffee Eileen was preparing—not to sober me up, you understand, but to settle my stomach, because as I explained so patiently to her, you just don't get drunk from twelve-year-old Scotch. We had just gotten back from our son's wedding, a beautiful affair, catered to the nth degree, and it had been an occasion well worth celebrating. The kids had planned it perfectly; refusing parental advice, gleaned from past experience, my son and brand new daughter-in-law insisted on doing it their way—and they did a good job.

Not too many things went wrong: the limousine that was supposed to transport us to the church never arrived, and we had to call a couple of private cabs to take us there. Steve and his brother Joe (his best man) took the first cab, hoping to get to the church before the bride became too nervous. Grandma, Eileen, and I, followed ten minutes later in the second cab, and—guess who ended up paying for both cabs?

Anyhow, we all made it. Fifteen minutes past post time, but we made it, just as the bride's father started on his second pack of cigarettes. Once inside, everything went smoothly, and the heart-rending sight of seeing our baby fly the nest was soon over, followed by a stint in the reception line, shaking a hundred hands and getting scores of kisses—not all of which were from females. Doubling up with the bride's parents (our limousine still had not arrived), we drove to the reception hall and awaited our guests.

That's where I started to go wrong. Naturally, the first drink had to be with my son's new father-in-law Joe, which is as it should be, and was accomplished to mutual toasts to our children's happiness. After Joe toasted our kids, it was only proper that I reciprocate, and the special bottle of Johnny Walker Black set aside for us was tipped up again; as it was again when my Dad came in, and then again when my brother came in, then when Joe's brother came in—and so on and so forth. By the time that most of the guests had arrived for the cocktail hour, the first bottle of Johnny Black was long gone, and the second bottle had a big dent in it—evidence that Joe and I had something else in common beside our kids. He's a letter carrier, and I always suspected that they drank too much, because my mail always landed up in someone else's box, and vice-versa. But Joe handled his Scotch well (about as well as I) and we both were as sober as the proverbial judge when the kids were ready to make their grand entrance.

Now we all had to line up outside the reception hall, to prepare for the grand entrance of the bridal couple, led by her parents, then us, and followed by all the kids in the bridal party. Leading down to the hall were four steps, and Joe made it fairly well, only missing one of them, while Yours Truly skipped two—saved from landing on his face by the fact that Eileen has learned to become a fast runner from several earlier bridal parties we had been in. Her nimble feet and sharp elbow guided us to the center of the dance floor, accompanied by the thunderous ovation of our guests and abetted by the sharp catcalls teasing us. Once all of us made it safely, we awaited the bride and groom, who soon floated in to the announcement of the emcee and a standing, whooping ovation from everyone.

Then the kids danced their first dance together as man and wife, to "their" song, followed by all the members of the bridal party, then the stumbling dads and teary moms, who then went through the ritual of dancing first with their respective counterpart's mate, and then with their new child. You see the same thing at every wedding, but it's not the same till you come to bat. Strange dancing partners just can't follow your lead like your wife does, and they act surprised when you step on their toes. The bride expressed some dismay when I stepped on her gown, but assured me that it was all right because she wasn't going to wear that gown again anyway. And Joan, the bride's mother, complimented my dancing, telling me how light on her toes I was!

I, of course, did everything perfectly. I apologized for spilling my champagne down my aunt's back, explaining that it was my brother's fault for making me turn around to talk to him. And I picked up my sister-in-law's prime ribs and wiped them off before I put it back on her plate. And the waiter apologized for dropping all the dishes after I stood up and knocked into his tray. And my friends from Medford are finally starting to talk to us again, tho' I still think they shouldn't have gotten so made at me—you can replace the fender of a new car quite easily these days.

And the band was wonderful, even though it turned out not to be the same band the kids contracted for. This was brought to my attention when I saw my son removing his jacket—in preparation to fight the band members, who were packing their instruments an hour before schedule. Playing the role of peace-maker, I made the band leader two offers he just couldn't resist: first, if he or any member of the band layed one hand on my kid or any member of his bridal party, that I would guarantee they would never be able to play an instrument again; secondly, if they persisted in not honoring the original contact, perhaps some new contract could be arranged for him.

This precluded further argument. I guess that seeing me in a tuxedo, with walrus mustache draped under flared nostrils, reminded him of Brando at that wedding in the movie. Anyway, they stayed and played for another hour, then threw in another hour on top of that, to "make up for the hard feelings." And after the mazurkas, polkas, waltzes, and tarantellas had made all our guests remember their own weddings, it was all over and we were all bidding goodnight to everyone. We came home in my brother's car. I offered to drive, but my brother refused, remembering the fender on my friend's car that had failed to dent a stanchion in the parking lot. And we all came to my place for black coffee that the girls insisted would settle our stomachs, and sat around talking about the wedding, and the fine time had by all. As I picked my brother off the floor for the second time, he remarked on how amazing it was to drink so much and yet remain sober, and kept repeating how much he had enjoyed the affair. And he made me promise to get him the recipe for a dish we had been served at dinner—a delicious stuffed lobster that could have easily been the main course any time, anywhere, but served as a hot appetizer at the gala affair.

I got the recipe from the caterer several days later, only after promising him that we would not utilize his services if, and when, our second son got married. He was dismayed because his band refused to play there anymore; but agreed to knock a couple of hundred bucks off their bill

for us, because they were not really the band originally contracted for, and besides, we had the original copy of the contact in our possession and were prepared to take legal measures if he failed to see simple reasoning. I suggested he keep the deposit and forget the balance, but relented and settled for half the original agreement. He seemed disturbed, but pleased to end the matter, and we settled like gentlemen, over several Scotches. Here's the recipe; I'm sure you'll find it as delicious as we did.

Lobster Delicioso

Ingredients (Serves 2-4)

2 lobsters, 1½-2 lbs. ea.

Stuffing mix:

1 cup bread crumbs
1 clove garlic, minced
1 sprig parsley, minced
1 tbsp. grated Parmesan
1/2 tsp. oregano
2 tbsps. olive oil
1 7 oz. can crab meat, diced

Mix stuffing ingredients together in bowl until it clings together. Add additional olive oil if mixture needs thinning. Mix well in bowl and set aside.

Parboil lobsters about 5 min., remove and cool under cold water.

Split lobsters, remove intestinal tract and bile sac located on underside of flipper (tail).

Place each half lobster in aluminum foil, fill body cavity and tail with stuffing mix.

Preheat oven at 400° for about 15 min., set thermostat at 350°, place lobsters in oven and bake at 350° for 1/2 hour.

Five minutes before completion, dab each lobster with olive oil or butter (as preferred), then let lobsters cook last 5 mins.

Remove from oven to platter, serve piping hot with hot garlic bread prepared while lobsters are cooking. Simply wet Italian bread with water, sprinkle on olive oil and garlic salt, wrap in aluminum foil, and let bake for about 15-20 mins. in same oven.

As a main course, it is ideal served with corn on the cob and a cold tossed salad, and washed down with ice cold imported beer or a chilled white wine.

If you like this easy lobster recipe, we'll tell you another one next time, when we'll also tell you of a completely different type of Italian wedding.

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Sinker Bouncing

with Matt Ahern

WEATHER & THE FISHERMAN

None of us fish very long before realizing weather has a strong influence on the outcome of the day's planned activities. By this, I don't just mean those days when totally unexpected cold, strong winds, rain, etc., force you to stay home or pack it in before the day's fishing is over ...or perhaps even want to kick yourself for ever leaving the house. But how about those days that start out so beautifully and then suddenly take a turn for the worse without (you think) a bit of warning? We've all experienced these frustrations at one time or another. But in many subtle ways, Nature does show the fisherman what is in store for him—if he will but see the handwriting on the wall. Many fishermen realize this and these are the fellows who attempt to interpret Nature's sign-posts, hoping that eventually they will learn to avoid many of those unexpected wet fannies, sudden storms, and other assorted miseries that seem to be the fisherman's lot. And in this respect, they are not alone. Farmers, out of necessity, make their own personal forecasts, and so, of course, do commercial fishermen, and all others who wrest a living from the sea. Most of these hard-working gentlemen have become so adept they often deliver a more accurate forecast than professional weathermen with the latest sophisticated paraphernalia. In fact, this is quite common, and I often think highly-touted weather personnel would do well to have a toil-hardened farmer or salty "old man of the sea" in the background. Certainly they would suffer less embarrassment at times.

Sure, those fellows who live close to Nature make mistakes; Nature, at best, is quite covetous about her intentions. But the "signs" are there for all who will read, and because of this, many sport fishermen consider reading these weather signs correctly an important part of the fishing game.

Sad to say, however, this isn't something one can accomplish in a month or a year; it takes an intense interest and much careful observation over the years. But it is well worth the effort, for certainly because of these skills, these fellows not only put more fish in the bucket, they often avoid many harrowing times out on the open sea. Forewarned, in this case, is certainly forearmed.

Let me give an example of exactly what is meant by relating an actual experience.

On this particular evening I had been thinking about hitting the sack and had turned on the TV for my usual dose of eleven o'clock hysterics when the phone rang. "It's Artie," my wife called from the kitchen. Artie Leidecker. Friend and buddy; chum and master fisherman. Good. I quickly made my way to the kitchen.

"Yeah, Artie. What's on your mind?" The voice I know so well for over fifty years rasped in my ear. "Whiting. Big ones. Got a couple of the guys lined up. Wanna go in the morning?"

"Where you fishing?" I asked, prepared always not to be surprised at what I might hear. "On that high piece of gravel southeast of Ambrose Ridge," came the reply.

"Don't con me, Artie. I know you mean that fifteen foot rise west of Cholera. The piece we found those big hake on last spring."

He chuckled. "Never kid a kidder, right?"

"Right. It's too far, Artie," I objected. "Too much of a run."

"Not if we leave at four in the morning. How about it? Looks like a fine day coming up."

I did some quick figuring. Two hours sleep—if I was lucky—plus time spent for breakfast, donning cumbersome foul-weather gear, stowing the stuff in the car, and a two-hour drive to Island Park to reach Artie's "Echo" would be cutting it kind of fine, but I could make it. "Okay, Artie, see you ... that is if the weather doesn't fall apart overnight."

The weather didn't fall apart—and I ought to know for I spent that sleeping time lying awake.

But this isn't unusual. I find the night before a planned fishing trip seems always to be fretful and often sleepless. I worry I won't hear the alarm; and I worry the weather will take a turn for the worse. All of which means every fifteen minutes or so I'm checking and rechecking, disturbing, as the old fisherman's poem has it, the whole household. It's a good thing my family is acclimated to these nocturnal activities, for it is far too late in the game to teach this old dog new tricks.

For a mid-December morning, the weather was fine: exceptionally clear, and about forty degrees, but most important of all—windless. A good break all around. Or so I thought. Artie was idling the engine as I stepped aboard his well-kept thirty-footer. In the gloom I could make out the two familiar figures of Al Dunn and Charley Hall. I called my greetings and in minutes we were pushing slowly over the glossy starlit surface of Reynold's Channel, heading for East Rockaway Inlet.

As we cleared the inlet, the Echo lifted lazily to gentle swells, proving we were once again on the ever-restless ocean. Artie headed south and a mite east and held it there. I chattered with the fellows for a spell and then went to the bow and looked about for the first signs of approaching dawn. Still too early. I looked up.

The stars, uncommonly bright and sharply defined, flared blue-white and fire-red as they shimmered and danced against the darkness of infinite space. Beautiful. No question about it. But at the moment I wasn't interested in beauty. This exotic display by Nature meant only one thing to this fisherman's eyes: snow tomorrow, and probably a good one. Maybe the last trip of the year. I went back to Artie and voiced my thoughts.

"Yeah, I noticed. But that isn't all." He glanced eastward. "Dawn soon." In the dim light of the instrument panel, I could see an anxious face. "Keep your eyes north and east, Matt, and let's hope there's no low-hanging clouds sitting there when the sun gets up." He tamped tobacco into his pipe. "Damn! Hate to quit now that we're out so far. But if those low-hangers are there at dawn, that's what we'll do. This will be no place for us."

I had to agree, for often when the threat of a possible heavy snowstorm is in the offing, and when at the moment the weather is much too warm for it to materialize, as it was that particular morning, a day of gale force, bitterly cold northwest wind ushers in what is to follow. Any low-hanging, flattened at the base, fleecy clouds clinging to the horizon at sun-up would tip us off; and if so, we were prepared to turn back immediately. A winter gale at sea is no place for a thirty-footer.

And this eventually is what we were forced to do. The clouds were there, all right, much to our disgust, for we were a good nine miles out, and when the sun cleared those clouds, we could begin to feel the wind on our stern. Artie immediately threw the Echo about in a wide sweep, and when he did we felt the increasing coldness and rising wind. The temperature must have dropped ten degrees in as many minutes, and it continued to drop as we beat our way back.

Before we made the lee of the shore line, that northwester was whistling and whooping along, the seas growing higher and higher with each passing minute, the white horses hissing past the plunging Echo. East Rockaway Inlet sure looked good.

But bad as it was, we weren't caught as indeed many innocents are; Nature had warned us in her subtle way and we had paid heed.

The signs are always there—you just have to learn how to interpret what they mean. Therefore, if you intend to take up fishing in a serious way and make the sea your hunting ground, I can give you no better advice than this: take no chances. Develop your own method of reading weather signs. It will pay off.

You may even save your life!

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Surf Side with Doc Muller

A Christmas Carol

It was the night before Christmas and all through the house, not a lure was stirring, not even a Rebel. The children were all nestled snug in their beds, while visions of toys danced through their heads. Yeah, I was nestled in my bed, too, but it was visions of Northport bass that danced through my head. What did I want for Christmas? That question was asked of me time and time again, but how can I tell them what I really want? The things that I want are too obscure or too expensive for anyone to take seriously: a pair of Gra-Lights or UniRoyal's top of the line wader. At about $70 to $90, that's quite a gift. How about a box of a certain brand of lure in a finish that can't be found in any local stores because the fish ate them up faster than they could be shipped in. I remembered the story, "Yes, Virginia, there is a Santa Claus." Could it be true? Could there be a red-costumed, rotund, jolly fellow who has dedicated his protracted life to determining what temporal items might improve the quality of the life for good people, and then provide these once a year.

I lay on my side looking out the window at the bright moon which was just now becoming shrouded with menacing clouds. My mind wandered. Somewhere out there was that perfect surf rod: just the right size, weight, and balance. Rods like that can be bought from local craftsmen, but depending upon how perfect your standards, that rod can cost in excess of $100. I remembered a reel that I saw in Europe. What craftsmanship! Sure, I'd have to modify the drag, but the rugged durability of that reel was not matched by anything in my current arsenal. Santa would have no trouble making world-wide connections, but a relative would not find it easy. What the heck! There were a few domestic reels I could use, but can't afford. An Ambassadeur 9000C for heavy surf fishing with bait. That reel has a magnificent drag system with a gear technology that allows a fella to really lean into a big running fish. I recalled Tom's forty-six pounder taken with that reel and a chunk of bunker. What a fish!

The moonlight was gone, and the night sky became light grey as lights from houses and streets reflected off the solid sheet of clouds. Was I dreaming? There was no sense of restlessness.

I sure could use a Shakespeare 1994 baitcasting reel to work on those spring weakfish in the back. Imagine if what Harry said was true. "You gotta get one of those reels. You can cast lures of any size without backlash. All you gotta do is adjust the pressure knob. And what a feel you get with that outfit." Beautiful reels, both of them—but quality costs. Sure, I could save up, but that means I'll have to wait a few months. Could one of my Loved Ones spring for one of those items?

It was snowing. I could see the big heavy flakes drift past the glow sent up from the porch light. I was mesmerized by the pattern of their motion—each flake falling in slow motion, occasionally swinging like a drifting flower petal, from right to left. I was asleep.

I was awakened by a sound muffled by, but also carried across, the snow. It was snowing hard: I could see that even as I pivoted at the edge of the bed. I glanced at the clock: 3:07 a.m. What was I doing looking out the window across the snow-covered landscape at 3:07 a.m.? In three hours the children will be tearing at packages and demanding parental attention.

My stomach cried for breakfast, but the children would not hear of that delay. "Darn!" I realized that I left my slippers upstairs. Once again, the children would not tolerate a delay. I pushed across the den. I stepped in something wet. "What's the matter, Daddy?" "Oh nothing," I grumbled, "I stepped in a puddle. It must be melted snow from last night." The kids were elated. "Who's gonna open their presents first?"

"SNOW!" I screamed and the whole family went silent. It was coming back to me—my dream. But it was snowing—that's no dream. I spun on my heels towards the tree. It was all there: the gifts we scattered near the tree before retiring and the one's that were left by the jolly night visitor. Why fight it, I thought? No matter how you look at it, everyone's happy and it looks like it's going to be a great fishing season.

The children were much too engrossed in their celebration to realize that some of the gifts were out of place or that chimney soot dotted almost everything near the tree. But the wife didn't. She was sending an evil glance in my direction. I was trying to think of how I might make anyone believe all of this. When she spoke. "I'm surprised at you. If you really wanted that fishing tackle, all you had to do was tell me about it, and I would have been delighted to get it for you. "I, I, I ..." I stuttered, searching for the words. Mercifully, she continued. "What did you do, hide them in the chimney until last night? And look at all my gifts! You must have spent a fortune!"

Should I attempt this explanation? I quickly took stock and realized that the falling snow had covered any Reindeer and sleigh tracks, the family was predisposed not to believe in chubby gentlemen in red suits, no witnesses were around to support my theory, and last but not least, I'm a crazy surf fisherman. So I did the only thing that a cowardly, crazy surf fisherman could do. I turned to her and said, "But it's Christmas, Merry Christmas."

Yes, Virginia, there really is a Santa Claus.

The sound was getting louder. I could make it out now. It was sleigh bells. Which of my nutty neighbors was out with a horse and sleigh at this time of night? I turned, begging for a little more sleep, towards the bed. New beach tires for the buggy! I had almost forgotten about that. Great, but another couple of hundred smackers! I caught a glimpse of something strange out of the corner of my eye, as I turned and allowed the idea of beach tires to rumble between my ears. I snapped my head back to the window so quickly that I thought that I felt something snap in the back of my neck. It was a sleigh all right—but in the sky, not on the ground! Why that defies the laws of physics. It just can't happen!

But it was happening! Was I still asleep and this image merely a mirage? The sleigh was approaching the house rapidly and it was clearly visible. No, no, no! This can't be happening. A sleigh with eight tiny Reindeer. I knew it would happen. I had finally lost my mind—one bass too many, 5x10" casts, a deep bite from the bluefish, or the thirty knot wind last October that blew through my ears instead of around my head! I had finally become a degenerate, senile surf fisherman.

I really thought that the sleigh would come crashing through my bedroom window, but between the big maple standing naked against the sky and the house, the sleigh veered skyward towards the roof. I grabbed a robe and rushed for the stairs: I would go out on the porch and find out if the crazy old driver with the red suit had cleared the chimney. Red suit? I'll need my slippers against the snow.

My slippers slapped against the heels of my feet as I scampered down the stairs; but I was stopped dead in my tracks at the foot of the stairs by a hearty laugh that was echoing from the den. I leaned around the corner like a child checking to see if Mom was out of sight before parading across the kitchen with jeans turned at the knee. I'm afraid that my mouth fell open when I saw him. Just like the poem, he was chubby, cheerful, replete with red-suit trimmed in white fur, a white beard, and of course, covered with soot.

There he was, chuckling each time he reached into his pack and puffing unmercifully on his pipe which, after decades of Christmases was chipped, charred, and well bitten. I thought to myself that it must be a very comfortable pipe. The kids' toys were first to appear, and he hadn't forgotten Mom: she would be greeted in the morning by a wide assortment of feminine finery. I couldn't believe my eyes when he pulled out the world's greatest surf rod. How did a twelve foot stick fit into a four-foot sack? No matter. The fancy reels were there, too; plus a few items I hadn't thought about—a quality hand scale, a pullover rain top, some thermal underwear, and an aluminum thermos.

All too quickly he was finished, and placing a finger aside of his nose, up the chimney he rose. He really did! Up the chimney, just like Mary Poppins! I was really tempted to get at those gifts, but I successfully resisted the temptation. The shock of all this had my adrenalin flowing at Mach I. I plodded into the kitchen and poured a lusty slug of "brandy" enriched egg nog.

Snow was still cascading down from heavy clouds, when my head hit the pillow. How I slept so well after all of that excitement is still a mystery to me, but I awoke to the urgent tugs of my children. "Daddy, it's snowing and Santa was here. Come on, get up!" "Okay, okay, I'm coming," I said meekly.

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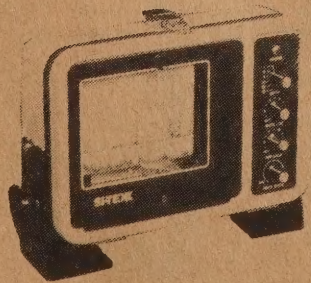

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HOOKING AND PLAYING FISH

by Gerald Hahn

Most beginners think that locating fish is the only hurdle to success. After that, they say that hooking and hanging onto a fish is child's play—the easiest thing to do in the world. Sometimes they are right, particularly when you see a kid sit back and catch flounder-after-flounder without even trying. And some days, species—like porgies—are so generous, it's all you can do to keep them from jumping into your boat. But in reality, it is not that easy to hook a fish and catch it; in fact, it's downright difficult with some species.

Take bluefish, for example. While almost anybody can fill a pail with snappers in short order, try hooking—and holding onto—a ten pound chopper! When I first started going out on party boats for monster blues (fish in the ten to twelve pound class), I soon noticed that for every fish brought to gaff, at least four were lost. I and other novices kept losing them like crazy, whereas only a few regulars were bringing in alligators consistently. First I had to learn that it was not simply luck; then I started watching experienced anglers. Finally I talked to them—indeed harassed them until I put all the angles together. It took some time.

My first problem was the drag. Setting a 3/0 reel to maximum with fifty pound test on, I reasoned a mere ten pound blue wouldn't have a chance—not until one snapped the rig right off the line. So I countered this for awhile by setting the drag light. When one fish, however, started taking line from the reel as though I had it in free-spool, I began tampering with the drag, momentarily forgetting to reel. It was all the fish needed. Having tried both extremes, I finally learned to set the drag properly, **just below** the breaking point and not to fuss with it when playing a fish—not even if the reel missed a few turns.

The next problem was learning how to bait up correctly. In eastern Long Island where I was fishing, they used whole bunker or herring over a foot long. Of course, I grabbed the largest baits first, following the axiom, "big fish like big baits." Right? Yes and no. While blues kept massacring my baits, they had a nasty habit of chomping them just behind the hook, leaving me with quite a collection of bunker halves. After awhile, I tempered my temptation to go big, "matching the hatch" instead with baitfish closest in length to the rig. This way, the hook could be placed as close to the tail as possible for short strikers; but even after selecting almost custom-made baits, I continued losing fish. Once, just as I was baiting up, a mate happened to be passing by and said, "you've got a scale on your hook!" Indeed, I had! Upon closer inspection, I noticed not

On party boats going for big blues, everyone gets hits, but only a few bring them in. In this photo, which angler do you think has a better chance?

one, but two fish scales covering the point and barb; like putting lubricant on the hook.

So after several trips spent straightening out my drag system problem and bait problems, I let the rig eighty feet down, felt the bump, and reeled up five turns called for on a new day full of hope. Feeling a lurch on the bottom, I struck the fish immediately and instead of getting a resistance at the other end, the line went slack. It took some time, as well as considerable experimentation before I developed a feel for setting the hook at just the right moment. A mate once told me, "give it a slow count to three." That helped, but not always. It was as if each fish hit in a distinct manner. Some would take the bait with a sudden jolt, almost tearing the rod out of my hands—it was all I could do to set the hook in time and hang on. Others, however, were nibblers and I discovered that if I did nothing—hard as it was to resist—the blue would let me know when it was ready. A short lift of the rod to feel for the fish, a few turns of the reel, and then another short, **hard** lift of the rod to set the hook while continuing to crank the handle, seemed to work best on these. Still others were caught by "fluking," letting out some line as when fluke fishing, then setting the hook. As for those "starters"—the first blues of the day on party boats—I learned not to become anxious about losing them. Most were quick on-and-off hits, so sudden, nothing could be done except re-bait as fast as possible. First fish are usually not feeding yet, merely chomping instinctively. Soon enough, the vibrations would bring others in, more aggressive blues, and that is when concentration is essential.

But my problems weren't over yet. Learning when to set a hook is one thing, keeping the fish on the hook is quite another. I kept losing fish on the way up. In one case, as I was reeling it in, the line suddenly went dead. "What the ...," I called out. I was not tangled with anyone and I knew that another bluefish had not cut the line from above (although I lost quite a few that way)—I could still feel some weight. As it turned out, the fish was still on, but moving with the bait—toward me—faster than I was reeling. The slack created momentarily, gave it the opportunity to throw the hook. In another case, my second fish of the day snapped the line, a simple matter of forgetting to check its condition after the first bout. In yet another case, in my excitement to catch a truly monstrous blue, I forgot to thumb the line back onto the spool as I was cranking it in. A nice mound built up on one side of the spool and before I knew what was happening, it was like Jack and Jill—the mono-hill came tumbling down onto the newly-wound segment and jammed the reel.

Having learned how to coordinate all these "simple" things, I experienced the most frustrating part of all—losing a chopper at the last minute after a ten minute haul from the eighty foot depths. I reared back on the very first fish I had on top to show it who was boss. Being half out of the water, the blue took one look at me and spit out the rig. The next time I had tangle problems. Not ducking in front or, or behind my fellow fishermen, I soon had three baited rigs—five extra pounds—as well as a chopper to contend with. Not for long though, as I heard that ominous twang. Finally, I had to learn to keep the rod down or straight out, rather than holding it in that dramatic arch as I was reeling in. With the rod held high against a blue, it certainly looks impressive (see photo of angler in the rear); but one fish decided to make a run for it in my direction at the last minute and like a tennis player who gets jammed on a return straight at him, I had no leverage. I couldn't even fall over backwards because the cabin was in the way, but I certainly felt like doing it after losing that one. In the photo, the left-hander in front is playing the fish correctly.

That seemed to be about it. I had finally learned to keep cool and remember ten basic rules for successful bluefishing:

1. Set the drag just below the breaking point, then leave it alone.
2. Select baits so that the sharpened hook is embedded nearest the tail.
3. Check for fish scales on the hook.
4. Concentrate when the fish hits: is it a smasher or a nibbler?
5. After setting the hook at the right moment, keep the line taut and reel steadily with the rod straight out or down.
6. Spool the line back onto the reel as you play the fish.
7. If fish runs, reel faster; if necessary, pump rod while reeling.
8. Mind other lines; move with the fish.
9. Keep fish's head in water to gaff.
10. Check condition of line after every bout or tangle.

After considerable trial-and-error, after learning all the ropes, I finally began bringing in blues consistently and my average went up decidedly. But having gained perhaps too much confidence, I was suddenly confronted one day with a jumping bluefish. Just as I was about to rear back, an experienced angler shouted, "no ... lower the rod! Point it straight down!" I listened, aimed the rod so far down I was almost in the water, but that fish, with its head just beneath the surface, did not throw the hook and gradually came toward me. When it was finally close enough to gaff, I slowly raised the rod to prevent it from going under the boat, keeping the pressure on all the time until I heard the mate call out, "Got it!" The pro, whom I thanked profusely, said, "That was exciting! That fish really put up a fight!" It sure did—after all, hooking and playing a fish is the easiest thing in the world.

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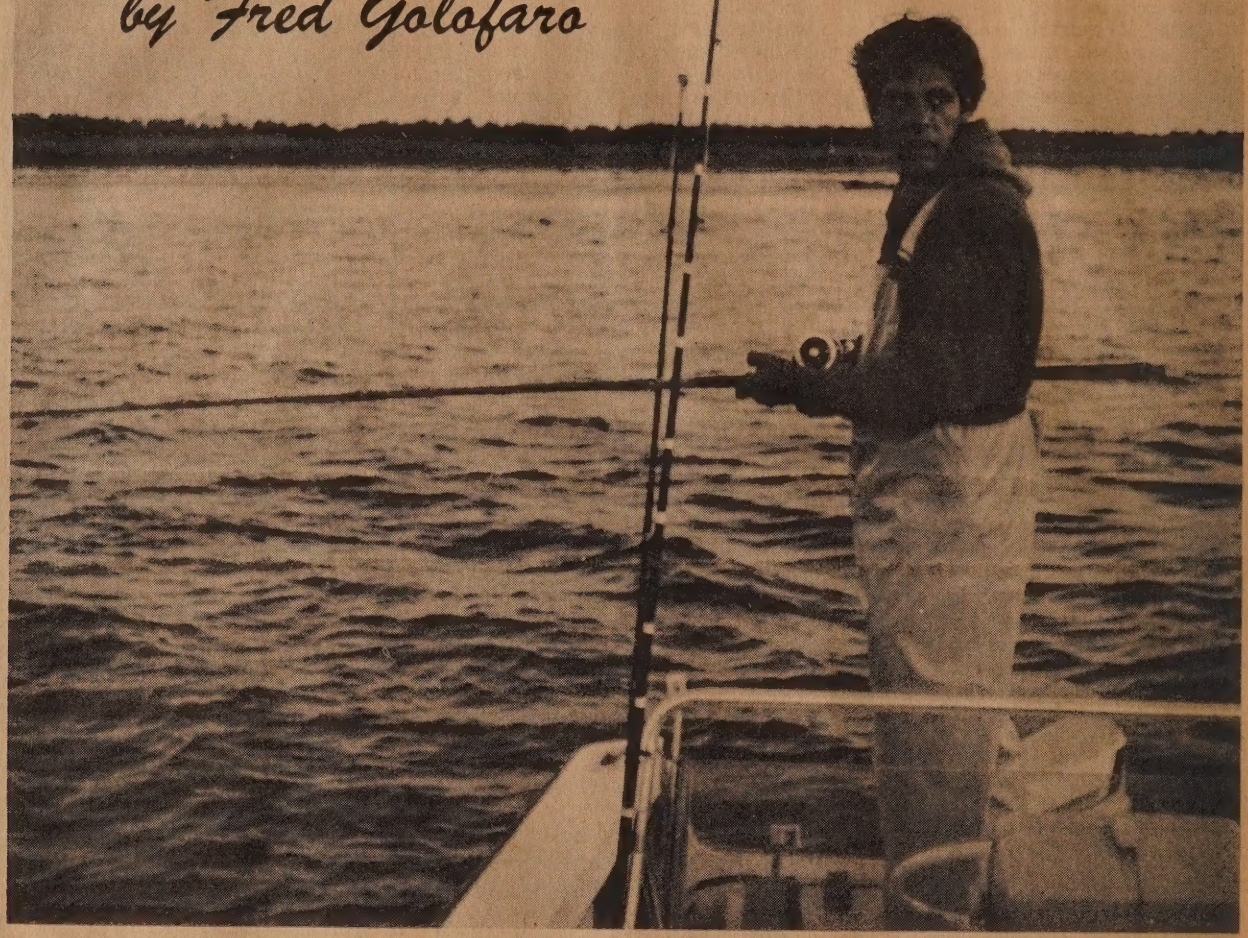
REFLECTIONS

by Fred Golofaro



Author gazes at a fading sunset while plugging his favorite stretch of south shore beach.

It's that time of year again, when cold and snow reduce fishing to talk and recollection. Anglers reminisce about past trips, providing themselves with the fortitude to make it through another Long Island winter. Every angler has moments that for one reason or another are indelibly planted in their memory. Always there to be relived and provide inspiration for future trips. I often reminisce about the trips that linger foremost in my mind. While savoring these past successes though, an internal conflict rages wtihin me. From what sojurns to the sea have I been granted my most precious and satisfying moments?

There was that foggy October night at Cedar Beach inside Fire Island Inlet. Richie Simmons and myself had fished the same stretch of beach every night for a week straight, armed with the knowledge that huge stripers would soon take up residence there. This one particular night, Richie's job had led him out of town. My brother Steve, despite pleas to accompany me to Cedar because "I just have a feeling," elected to make the run to Montauk where some schoolies had been taken the previous night. Little wonder! Why would anyone with an ounce of sanity choose to fish a beach which, for seven nights running, had not surrendered even a mere bump from a lurking striper? Well, I no longer had a feeling—I knew now that tonight would be "the night." Well, to make a long story short, I had six bass in the thirty pound class on the beach in less time than it takes to tell about it. A great night's fishing by anyone's standards; yet the memories are as much of the work and sweat it took to get those fish off the beach as of the fish themselves. I had to carry those cows two at a time over a mile-and-a-half of sand beach before finally being rescued by a set of headlights which just barely pierced the fog-shrouded darkness of that night.

What will linger longest in my memory about that trip though, were the looks on the faces of my brother and his partner. I had just returned from weighing the fish in at Augie's when they pulled up alongside the curb, puffy-eyed and yawning. Typically worn out by the long ride and the comparatively arduous conditions often associated with fishing Montauk. Nonetheless, they were buoyed up by their catch of several rats, which they assumed was far more than what they could have expected at Cedar. They sat curbside looking at one another, their eyes revealing confidence in having made the right decision. It was short lived. One by one, I lifted the huge stripers from the trunk of the car. As each fish hit the ground with a resounding thud, their faces dropped and eyes bulged until finally they were fighting each other to exit from the same car window. Deep down I guess we are all a bit

sadistic.

The next ten nights surrendered many pleasant memories, as a small group of us worked over the concentration of fish. Marty Beer contributing his jokes and laughter, Blair Moger's shrill whistle penetrating the darkness every time he hung a fish, Jack Hone and Richie, my brother Steve—all good companions in the pursuit of Roccus.

In terms of quantity and quality combined, one would be hard put to match the fishing Richie Simmons and I shared under the light at Montauk one September night several years ago. We had arrived with the tide about an hour up. A star-filled sky and the wind whispering out of the northwest, gave no hint of the past two days' howling nor'easter. Conditions were ideal. Although we prefer to have the tide at least halfway up for fishing under the light, eagerness got the better of us. We were into fish immediately on yellow darters. The rest of the night was a dreamlike blur of hooked fish, screeching drags, drenching spray and gaffed fish being dragged across the rocks. By the time day began to break some five hours later, and with the fish still hitting, forty-seven bass and ten bluefish in the teens and twenty pound class lay strewn about the rocks and boulders. Another two hours later, we had the last of the fish dragged out and stacked into the back of my Jeep. As we headed home, our bodies numb and weary, we carried with us enough memories of that night to last most people a lifetime.

Everyone can recall their first striper. I know I will never forget mine: a mere eight pounder that managed to drag my light spinning rod across ten feet of sand and into three feet of water. That night under the Bayville Bridge, with all the naivete typical of a nine-year-old, I had propped my rod across a bucket while awaiting a hit. When it came, I stood in stunned disbelief and watched rod and reel slide through the sand and disappear into the swirling currents. Eventually, I gathered my wits and splashed in fully clothed to retrieve it. I managed to land the fish, despite a reel clogged chock full of sand.

Experiences with big fish, many fish, and first fish are all well and good. They will always have as much as place in my memory as the next guy. I find more and more however, that each time I take a few moments to reflect upon my angling experiences, these memories are being replaced with recollections of what many people consider the little things.

My favorite fishing nowadays consists of quietly drifting close along Great South Bay's South Beach and tantalizing the resident population of stripers with big, slowly-worked swimming plugs. My frequent companion on these late afternoon or early morning trips is John Schauer. Some days, we boat a fish or two. Most days we settle for the excitement of raising several fish to the surface. This has become satisfaction enough. Often we are treated to the sight of a breathtaking sunset, the quiet and solitude this stretch of beach offers, and the company of someone you know is enjoying the moment for the same reasons as yourself. I can vividly recall the sight of a pair of deer peacefully grazing along the water's edge, bathed in the golden hues of sunrise and an early morning mist. Recalling the sight of a just-released fish turning tail and returning to its watery world is far more gratifying to me now than seeing that same fish hanging from a scale in the local tackle shop.

I feel a growing awareness of knowing that I am an intruder in a place where nature reigns supreme. Whenever conditions are right, whether it be from boat or beach, and I the intruder gently free a worthy fish rather than an adversary, then I can say I understand and am at least trying to feel a part of nature's delicate balance. These are the moments which will leave the sweetest taste. Moments which will serve to "cleanse the soul."

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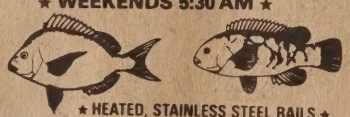
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The Viking Star reports that the codfish action at Cartwright has been improving with fish running 8-10 lbs., being taken on clam. They are also getting a good sprinkling of mackerel as well.

Captain Richie Rade's **Marlin IV** reports that Saturday's codfishing was fair with 12 passengers taking 50 cod averaging 12-15 lbs. per fish. The pool fish hit an even 40 lbs. Some pollack and a bunch of big blackfish were also boated at Cartwright. The day's catch was on bait and jigs.

This 4 lb. 5 oz. humpback porgy was boated by Bill Klevitz off of Block Island. Fish was weighed at Tuma's Dock. Subscriber Club Photo.

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Capt. Eddie Brincat of the **Capt. Eddie B II** called to wish you all a happy holiday season and wish you good fishing over the winter.

The Speedy VI reports that he has been getting cod everyday, though number are not astounding, as is the story all over. Saturday saw 26 cod taken on open bottom by 13 men. This was on one drop that they remained on all day, fishing clam. A few doggies were also taken. On Thurs., the boat had 9 cod, on Wed., 7 cod and on Tues. 10 cod, all on open bottom, all fish running 15-35 lbs.

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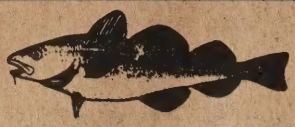

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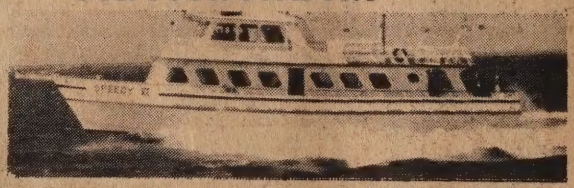

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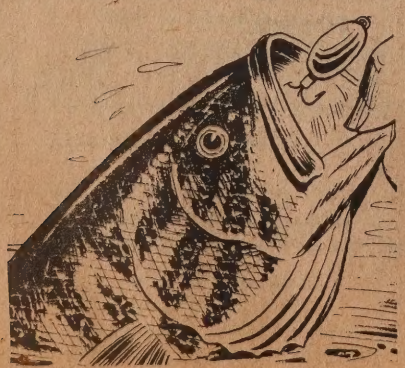

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Big Eddie at **Shore Isle Marina** tells us that Dom Scotto of Massapequa along with buddies A. Deambrosio and W. Van Tassel on the Idle Hour had 5 cod on Wed. from 15-27 lbs., fishing in 100 ft. of water, 160° out of Jones Inlet, fishing open bottom at the Fingers on clam. On Fri., Rich Yakel had 18 keeper flounder in just one hour fishing close to the Shore Isle Marina dock, using red dyed clam and clam chum. John Esposito and pal Nick fished Squaw Island on Wednesday, taking 13 keeper flounder from ¾ to 1½ lbs. on clam.

WEST END SOUTH SHORE

★ BEST BET ★ WHITING

FREEPORT

Captain Richie Kessinger of the **Star Stream II** tells us he has been getting anywhere from 3-10 cod per day during the week. He says there are fair to good numbers of cod being taken by the draggers in the same areas they are fishing hook and line. The fish are not eager to grab a bait, as evidenced by the numbers caught. Richie says the fishes stomachs are 99 percent empty upon examination, further proving that they just are not feeding now. They will be once the water temp drops low enough. Mackerel, ling and whiting are around to be caught in abundance right outside Jones Inlet, but the boat's customers are insisting upon going after the reluctant cod.

The Capt. Lou II tells us that Thurs., Fri., and Saturday's afternoon whiting catches ranged from excellent to fantastic. Mike says these were all baseball bats, and that the

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mackerel were big also, just 10 mins. from the inlet. Sunday's run was confined to the bay due to the weather, so fares picked away at flounder averaging 15 per man, with high hook being 25 good flatties.

This big cow was Maureen Esposito's first striper ever. She took it on a Lupo Baby Bunker Spoon trolled in 30' of water off of Atlantic Beach. Caught aboard the charterboat "A.M."

SHEEPSHEAD BAY

Capt. Nick on the **Blue Sea III** tells us that on Wednesday, 17 fares had over 500 blackfish from 2-9 lbs., on green crab at 17 Fathoms.

Captain Kevin on the **Dorothy B** reports plenty of whiting Monday through Friday of this past week, 90% of the catch being whiting. Fishing was between the channels just 45 mins. from the dock. Kevin says the fish were giants, that he's sailing daily, so come on down.

The Amberjack V reports whiting and ling catches are good and improving as are the night whiting trips.

Joe of the **Helen H** tells us that Saturday's catches were so-so on whiting and ling mixed, fishing Scotland and the channels. On Sunday, there were solid catches of whiting in the morning with doulb ena and triple headers common. Thursday and Friday and also Tuesday, saw very good catches for passengers on the whiting and ling.

The Elsie K III reports that the whiting has been super fabulous just 20 mins. from the Rockaway Pt. jetty, using whiting strips as bait. Captain Tom says he is switching to his winter schedule this week and will be sailing Wed., Sats., and Sundays until further notice at 7AM for whiting only.

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FISH TALK: FROM THE MAILBOX

(Continued from page 6.)

smell and sound. The mouth has many nerve endings that are intended to give a fish the wherewithal to "feel" what they eat and, in some cases, to sense it at the same time. A hook that penetrates the mouth of a fish does hurt and that's one reason why a fish tries to swim away rapidly when it is hooked; but they also "run" because the fisherman is pulling back with the rod and the reel. In most cases if the fisherman stops pulling, the fish will stop swimming. Fish do not have the ability for complex thought and personal evaluation that humans have. Most pain felt by people is interpreted and given additional meaning based upon conditioning and experience. Thus, some people can "handle" pain more easily than others. Pain, like seeing, hearing and smelling, is a phenomena of the brain and not the sense organs at the site at which it is applied. Therefore, once a fish is unhooked or gets away, the pure "pain" becomes only a "presence"—that is it there, but not a cause for panic and anguish. The explanation assumes, of course, that severe damage was not done. Severe damage may cause a fish to go into shock and die just like any other living thing and thus lend much more significance to the event of hooking.

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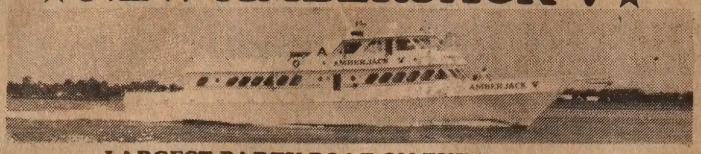
★SHEEPSHEAD BAY★

★ NEW AMBERJACK V ★



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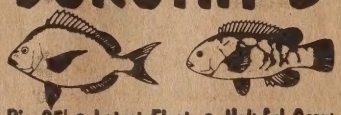

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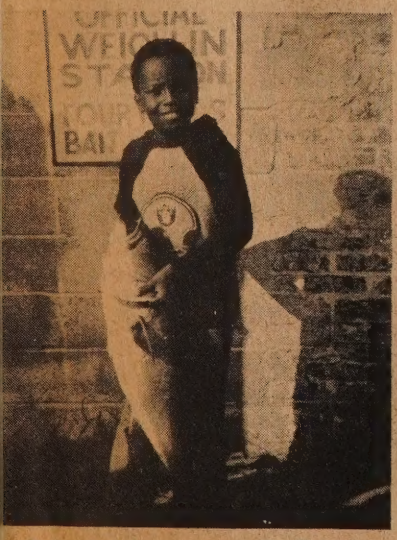
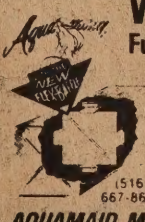


Robert Johnson, age 9, fished Huntington Harbor and landed this 19 lb. 14 oz. bluefish. Photo courtesy of Four Winds Tackle.



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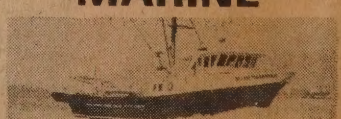

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HIGH TIDE TABLES

DAY	SANDY HOOK AM	SANDY HOOK PM	Breakwater Harbor AM	Breakwater Harbor PM	NEW YORK AM	NEW YORK PM	NEW LONDON AM	NEW LONDON PM	WILLETS POINT AM	WILLETS POINT PM	BRIDGE-PORT AM	BRIDGE-PORT PM	NEW-PORT AM	NEW-PORT PM	DATE
THUR.	7:22	7:45	8:16	8:38	8:04	8:29	8:54	9:26	11:22	11:54	10:52	11:19	7:15	7:35	12/14
FRI.	7:59	8:26	8:56	9:16	8:45	9:12	9:34	10:05	11:54	—	11:32	11:59	7:55	8:17	12/15
SAT.	8:36	9:04	9:34	9:56	9:23	9:55	10:11	10:46	12:22	12:10	—	12:10	8:38	8:59	12/16
SUN.	9:14	9:46	10:12	10:36	10:03	10:37	10:51	11:30	12:39	12:33	12:37	12:49	9:19	9:42	12/17
MON.	9:52	10:28	10:51	11:16	10:45	11:22	11:33	—	1:03	1:08	1:15	1:28	10:01	10:27	12/18
TUE.	10:32	11:11	11:32	—	11:22	—	12:15	12:15	1:37	1:47	1:55	2:08	10:43	11:13	12/19
WED.	11:14	11:58	12:01	12:14	12:05	12:39	1:01	1:02	2:17	2:31	2:37	2:50	11:28	—	12/20
THUR.	11:56	—	12:48	1:03	12:47	12:39	1:53	1:54	3:02	3:18	3:22	3:39	12:02	12:19	12/21

HOW TO USE TIDE TABLES:

To compute the high tide for the area you wish to fish, simply find the closest area on the conversion tables. Add or subtract the hours and minutes as indicated from that areas station above. Example: "Shinnecock Inlet.....—0 50" is listed under "On SANDY HOOK." —0 50 means you subtract 50 minutes from the times given for the SANDY HOOK STATION for the day you are going fishing. This is the approximate time for the high tide in the area. For low tide, add 6 ½ hours to this figure.

On SANDY HOOK

STATEN ISLAND	+ 0 27
ATLANTIC HIGHLANDS	—0 01
Red Bank, Navesink R.I.	+ 0 48
Long Branch	—0 34
SHARK RIVER INLET	—0 18
Shark River Basin	+ 0 27
MANASQUAN INLET	—0 12
Seaside Park	—0 33
Mantoloking Bridge	+ 5 34
TOMS RIVER	+ 4 37
Waretown	+ 2 33
BARNEGAT LIGHT	—0 20
Manahawkin Bridge	+ 2 33
Beach Haven	+ 1 47
LITTLE EGG INLET	—0 01
Seven Islands	+ 0 12
Graveling Point	+ 1 05
Mullica River	+ 1 55
Grassy Bay	+ 1 08
ABSECON INLET	+ 0 14
Atlantic City Pier	—0 26
Gt. Egg Harbor Inlet	+ 0 12
GREAT EGG HARBOR	+ 0 46
CORSON INLET	+ 0 09
TOWNESEND INLET	+ 0 06
HEREFORD INLET	+ 0 02
Grassy Sound Bridge	+ 0 45
Cape May Harbor	—0 02
Rehoboth Beach	—0 07
INDIAN RIVER INLET	+ 0 14
SHINNECOCK INLET	—0 50
Shinnecock Bay	+ 1 25
East Quogue	+ 2 45
Shinnecock Canal	+ 1 18
Indian Reservation	+ 3 05
MORICHES INLET	—0 56
Smith's Point	+ 3 28
Harts Cove	+ 1 30
Potunck Point	+ 3 35
Mastic Beach	+ 3 28
FIRE ISLAND INLET	—0 38
Democrat Point	—0 38
Coast Guard Station	—0 19
Fire Island Light	+ 0 47
GREAT SOUTH BAY	
Sayville	+ 3 39
Heckscher State Pk.	+ 3 20
Bay Shore	+ 2 23
Babylon	+ 2 12
Amityville	+ 2 21
JONES INLET	—0 19
Zachs Bay	+ 1 25
Seaford Harbor	+ 2 05
Freeport Creek	+ 0 34
E. ROCKAWAY INLET	—0 06
Long Beach Bridge	+ 0 19
ROCKAWAY INLET	—0 00
Beach Ch. Bridge	+ 0 38
JFK Airport	+ 0 26

On BRIDGEPORT

Lloyd Point	+ 0 08
Cold Spring Harbor	+ 0 08
Bayville Bridge	+ 0 13
Eatons Neck Point	+ 0 03
Northport Bay	+ 0 03
Norwalk Islands	+ 0 10
Smithtown Bay	—0 03
Cranes Neck Point	+ 0 05
Port Jefferson Harbor	+ 0 03
New Haven Harbor	+ 0 08
Mount Sinai Harbor	—0 08
Herod Point	—0 07
Mattituck Inlet	+ 0 19
Horton Point	—0 20
Truman Beach	—0 42
Falkner Island	—0 13
Sachem Head	—0 10
Branford Harbor	—0 07
New Haven Harbor	—0 08
Milford Harbor	—0 07
Stratford	+ 0 27
Shelton	+ 1 36
Black Rock Harbor	—0 03
Saugatuck River	—0 01
South Norwalk	+ 0 10
Greens Ledge	—0 01
Stamford	+ 0 04
Cos Cob Harbor	+ 0 06
Greenwich	+ 0 02

On NEW LONDON

Orient Point	+ 0 27
Little Gull Is. (Race)	+ 0 12
Greenport	+ 1 04
Southold	+ 1 43
New Suffolk	+ 2 26
South Jamesport	+ 2 32
Shinnecock Canal	+ 2 33
Noyack Bay	+ 2 05
Sag Harbor	+ 0 59
Gardiners Bay	+ 0 21
Promised Land	—0 14
Montauk Inlet	—0 25
Montauk Point	—1 13
Niantic	+ 1 20
Stonington	—0 33
Noank, Mystic River	—0 23
THAMES RIVER	
Smith Cove	—0 01
Norwich	+ 0 09
CONNECTICUT RIVER	
Saybrook jetty	+ 1 10
Lyme	+ 1 24
Essex	+ 1 38
East Haddam	+ 2 41
Higganum Creek	+ 2 54

On WILLETS PT.

Little Neck Bay	—0 10
Execution Light	—0 06
Manhasset Bay	—0 01
Hempstead Harbor	—0 11
City Island	—0 03
Rye Beach	—0 28
Port Chester	—0 09
Mamaroneck	—0 08
New Rochelle	—0 24
Davids Island	—0 02

On B'WATER HB.

CAPE MAY POINT	—0 10
Miami Beach	+ 1 17
East Point	+ 0 53
Egg Island Point	+ 0 33
Cape Henlopen	—0 05
ROOSEVELT INLET	+ 0 09
Mispillion River Ent.	+ 0 33
St. Jones River Ent.	+ 0 57

On NEW YORK

Jersey City	+ 0 07
Geo. Washington Br.	+ 0 46
Spuyten Duyvil	+ 0 58
Ossining	+ 1 53
Peekskill	+ 2 24
West Point	+ 3 16
Newburg	+ 3 42

On NEWPORT

Sakonnet	—0 10
Tiverton	+ 0 21
Beavertail Point	—0 02
Prudence Is., Sandy Pt.	+ 0 10
Bristol	+ 0 10
Warren	+ 0 21
Nayatt Point	+ 0 12
Pawtucket	+ 0 21
East Greenwich	+ 0 16
Wickford	+ 0 12
Narragansett Pier	—0 08
Point Judith Harbor	—0 07
BLOCK ISLAND	
Great Salt Pond	+ 0 05
Old Harbor	—0 14
Watch Hill Point	+ 0 44

SUNRISE/SUNSET

12/2	7:09	4:29
12/7	7:14	4:29
12/12	7:19	4:29
12/17	7:22	4:30
12/22	7:24	4:32
12/27	7:27	4:35

PHASES OF THE MOON

NEW	1st Qtr.	FULL	2nd Qtr.
12/29	12/7	12/14	12/22

The Original Knight
SOLUNAR TABLES
When To Fish Or Hunt

The schedule of solunar periods for the following week as printed below has been taken from the original Knight Solunar Tables. Plan your day so that you will be fishing good areas during these times when the fish should be most active. The tables are not a guarantee you will catch fish, however.

The major periods begin at the time shown and last for an hour-and-a-half or two hours thereafter, and are in the bold type face. The minor periods are shorter in duration and lighter type.

	AM Minor	AM Major	PM Minor	PM Major
Thurs.	3:50	**10:25**	4:20	**10:50**
Fri.	4:35	**11:20**	5:05	**11:40**
Sat.	5:30	—	5:55	**12:10**
Sun.	6:25	**12:35**	6:45	**1:00**
Mon.	7:15	**1:25**	7:35	**1:50**
Tues.	8:05	**2:15**	8:25	**2:40**
Wed.	8:55	**3:05**	9:15	**3:25**
Thurs.	9:40	**3:50**	10:00	**4:10**

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If the fish only knew the secrets we told you each week, they'd head for the shoals! Secrets like what type of bait they will be feeding on, or what type and color lure they will be striking, at what speed and depth, on what tide... and most importantly, at what *place*. Fortunately, fish can't read...but fishermen *can*—so subscribe today to *The Fisherman*, and receive 50 big issues a year filled with fishing secrets and info!

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